

Sculptor Works With Chicken Wire

Artists often use chicken wire as the framework for sculptures, but we were impressed by an Australian artist who uses chicken wire for the sculpture itself. His sheep look soft and wooly. Birds appear to have feathers that could take flight. And his celebrity portraits are incredible.

"After many years of trial and error, I've built up a large variety of effects and methods that I can use to create almost any subject," says sculptor Ivan Lovatt. "The process starts by crushing up the wire to make a kind of sponge, then I make a rudimentary shape of the subject. All parts are made separately, and then added to the framework. The final layer of the sculpture is made from wire that's folded over many times. This makes the work

very strong and durable."

His favorite subjects are wildlife, particularly birds of prey. But, his commission work has also included pets and livestock including horses, roosters, bulls and sheep.

A few of his many portraits include Bob Dylan, Mick Jagger, Bob Marley and Abraham Lincoln. A collection of them was commissioned for Ripley's Believe it or Not museums; he ships commissioned work to the U.S., Canada and other parts of the world. Prices range from \$150 for a little blue wren to \$20,000 for 10-ft. sculptures.

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Australian artist Ivan Lovatt uses chicken wire to make sculptures of livestock, including sheep and bulls.

Mini Elevator Brings Wood To Fireplace

If you want to avoid the mess and effort required to get firewood up from a lower level of your house, you'll like this mini elevator that brings wood to your living room.

The WoodWaiter is designed to handle 16 or 24-in. firewood and can move up to 200 lbs. of wood at a time. A 1/3 hp electric motor mounts on a platform below the 28-in. high basket. The operator simply loads the basket, turns a key and then walks upstairs to unload the basket.

"As far as we know, it's the only dumbwaiter designed specifically to lift firewood," says Matt Fowler, W.B. Fowler Industries, Waterville, Quebec. "Commercial dumbwaiters sell for \$5,000 and up, and they don't have the versatility or space-saving features that ours has. My dad built the first one for his farmhouse about 30 years ago, and since then it's had the same basic design with only a few tweaks over the years. In fact, the original model is still working."

"The mechanism that supports the basket hangs from the floor joists. It's all below the

floor so nothing extends into the room above. The design allows the WoodWaiter to be installed inside a hearth, wood box, or trap door.

"The basket is built strong and won't bend. We can custom build the basket to fit any installation."

"We also offer an optional rollout basket that fits inside the basket and rides on 4 neoprene caster wheels to avoid damaging wood floors. Once you bring wood up to floor level, you pull the rollout basket out and roll it over beside your fireplace or wood stove. The same basket can also be used for groceries or other cargo."

The WoodWaiter comes with a 5-year guarantee and sells for \$1,800 to \$3,000 depending on options, travel distance, etc.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Matt or Debbie Fowler, W.B. Fowler Industries, 4665 Nichol Rd., Waterville, Quebec, Canada JOB 3H0 (ph 800 290-8510; contact@woodwaiter.com; www.woodwaiter.com).



WoodWaiter mini elevator brings firewood up from a lower level of your house to your living room. Basket rolls across floor.

Operator simply loads the basket, turns a key and then walks upstairs to unload the basket.

Canned Beef Sales Support Farms Run By Nuns

By Dee Goerge & C.F. Marley, Contributing Editors

Every spring, Sister Clarence blesses calves raised on the Ancilla Beef & Grain farm. That might be one reason why the canned beef produced by the Catholic nuns who run the farm is so tasty.

The Angus/Simmental/Salers cross cattle are raised naturally on rotationally-grazed pastures that surround the convent of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ located near Donaldson, Ind.

Ancilla is Latin for female servant. The name reflects the nuns' approach to serving others. Beef cattle play an important part in their ministry. The beef feeds the sisters, 200 co-workers, program participants, and residents who live in facilities on the 1,000-acre property. The meat is also sought after by local customers, who buy it either frozen or canned.

The Poor Handmaids sisters continue the work of their German foundress, Blessed Catherine Kasper, who supported herself and her mother by working as a farm hand for 10 cents a day. She started her order in 1851, and worldwide there are about 650 sisters. Sixty-three of them live on the Donaldson property that was purchased in the early 1900's.

On-site ministries include a 2-year liberal arts college, nursing home, independent living apartments, retreat and conference center, services for women and children in need, and a variety of other ministries.

"We are an intergenerational living and learning center. We all interact," says Julie Dowd, communications director. "The farm is one important ministry of the Poor Handmaids."

Farm managers butcher cattle 7 times a year to sell frozen or fresh to local customers. Twice a year, 4 head are butchered and canned to sell to customers both locally and by mail order.

They get about 240 27-oz. cans of beef per animal, says Kim Lamb, who manages the marketing for the farm. While frozen beef can only be sold in Indiana, the canned beef has been shipped as far as Alaska.

"Canned beef is so convenient," Dowd says. "Ancilla beef is really sought after, and we get top dollar for it at \$7.25 per can. It's natural and has a good flavor. Nothing is added – not even salt."

Animals are fed grains and hay raised on the farm. Excess hay – about 700 tons a year – is sold to area dairy farms.

The Poor Handmaids sell some of their meat through the farmers market in nearby Plymouth. They also have a greenhouse that grows vegetables that are served at their Ministry Center.

"We're very unique," Dowd says. "We've created our own little village. We've even got a lake."

The Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ website (www.poorhandmaids.org) describes their ministries and provides a way to donate



Catholic nuns raise cattle naturally on pastures that surround their convent near Donaldson, Ind.

money to help fund their services.

Those interested in ordering canned beef can find more information on the Ancilla Beef website. Order early, Lamb suggests. Canned beef sells out very quickly.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Ancilla Beef and Grain Farm, P.O. Box 1, Donaldson, Ind. 46513 (ph 574 360-9649; www.ancillabeef.com).



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